

Our Neighbours

VOLUNTEERS POLICY

Revised & Approved April 2023

A. INTRODUCTION

Our Neighbours Ministry greatly values the many people and relationships and partnerships that enable Our Neighbours Ministry to do all that it does. This document provides a list of guidelines and expectations for visitors and volunteers to Our Neighbours Ministry (ONM).

Definition

A volunteer is defined as someone: “who offers their services to make a contribution to assist another community, for humanitarian reasons, not for personal financial gain”. Volunteers can be either:

- Visitors – are defined as those who visit a project for very short periods, and are learning about the project’s operations, its goals and the needs of the Project beneficiaries. Visitors should be accompanied at all times by an authorised staff member.
- Short term Volunteers – have a specific role that they are expected to undertake for a designated time period of up to 3 months in duration.
- Long term Volunteers - have a specific role that they are expected to undertake for a designated time period of more than 3 months duration.
- Volunteer Teams - have designated work times as part of a coordinated itinerary.
- Partners and supporters who come to visit or volunteer.

Volunteers will be appointed to meaningful ministry/work placements, treated as equal co-workers, receive effective supervision, provided with full involvement and participation, and recognition of work undertaken.

In return, volunteers shall agree to actively perform their duties to the best of their abilities and uphold the expectations, policies and procedures of Our Neighbours Ministry. Our Neighbours Ministry seeks to provide a conducive working environment for all volunteers however we do not take any legal or financial responsibility for volunteers. Therefore any risks and financial needs of the volunteer must be met by the volunteer.

Underage Volunteers

Applicants who have not reached the age of 18 years must have written consent from their legal guardian to undertake voluntary service with Our Neighbours Ministry. Whilst every precaution is made for their well-being in service we cannot be held accountable for their actions outside working hours.

B. KEEPING THE FOCUS

Our Neighbours Ministry reaches out to the poorest of the poor, restoring those that have lost hope. We seek to glorify God in showing His love to our neighbours. Our Neighbours Ministry may reach out to different community groups, different age groups, in different contexts, but in all cases the core values of our Ministry pertain to each and every area of our work.

Therefore all volunteers need to:

1. Be fluent in the Purpose, Vision, Mission and Objectives of Our Neighbours Ministry, and be able to explain to others what Our Neighbours Ministry does and what we are here for;
2. Be aware of the Values of ONM and seek to display them in all that they do:
 - a) Jesus and the Kingdom of God
 - b) Glory to God
 - c) Showing God's Love
 - d) Focus on the most vulnerable and poor
 - e) Valuing people
 - f) Hope
 - g) Body Ministry & Relationships
 - h) Accountability
 - i) Doing our best
 - j) Faithfulness and love.
 - k) Mercy
3. Know in general what the different areas of the Ministry do, and who the team leaders are to be able to direct others with queries.
4. Adhere to all the regulations, policies and procedures of the Organisation, and be willing to be part of a fully-Christian ministry.

C. SPEAKING/ TEACHING AND LEADING PROGRAM DELIVERY

Volunteers commit to following the below:

1. Communicate with Our Neighbours Ministry Team Leaders on all activities to be undertaken, and about any problems experienced
2. To be compassionate with the people they encounter, non-judgemental regarding their experiences and thoughts, willing to listen. E.g. Refrain from using words like orphanage when reference is made to our children's home – suggestion use Babies Home not Isaiah's Orphanage. Referring to people living on the streets as destitute, we prefer to say people living in difficult circumstances.
3. Cultural Differences - Where volunteers are involved with children (and adults), they need to be aware that these children are being raised in a Zimbabwean Society and therefore volunteers should seek to understand this culture so helping these children still remain relevant to their society and culture.

4. If a volunteer desires to give any assistance or gifts to either a beneficiary or staff member of Our Neighbours Ministry, they should first speak to the appropriate Team Leader for the ministry area. The Team Leader will give consideration and guidance as to whether this is appropriate or not.

For each desire to give a gift/assistance, please seek the guidance in advance of the Team Leader. This measure is also put in place for protection of the volunteers as they will most likely be approached to give gifts to individuals.

This also applies to a situation where a volunteer desires to give regular support to a beneficiary or staff member, or even situations where people desire to assist a beneficiary or staff member after they have completed their time as a volunteer.

D. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

All volunteers and those supervising them must follow the Our Neighbours Ministry Policies and Procedures manual when volunteers join Our Neighbours Ministry. The general points include:

1. An application form and at least 2 references must be provided by all applicants for voluntary service. Relevant follow-ups will be conducted by the Administration Team where appropriate.
2. An interview can and may be called for prior to acceptance of voluntary service.
3. Volunteers agree to personal information being kept on file regarding their application and placement with Our Neighbours Ministry. This information will only be shared within the Ministry and not be shared with other Organisations without prior consent.
4. Volunteers must sign an agreement giving authorisation and indemnity during their time of service with us. In signing the agreement volunteers acknowledge their agreement to abide by the ONM Policy and Procedure Manual.

Volunteer Agreement

During my appointment volunteering with Our Neighbours Ministry,

I _____ agree to the following conditions:

I have read and will comply with Our Neighbours Ministry Child Protection Policy and the above mentioned guidelines, and provide a copy of my Passport and relevant Police clearance document from my country of residence.

I understand my volunteer relationship with Our Neighbours Ministry is the same as an employee. That is, I will comply with all workplace direction, instruction, policies, procedures and guidelines of Our Neighbours Ministry.

I will ensure my behaviour and presentation is respectful at all times of cultural sensitivities and Our Neighbours Ministry Organisational standards.

I understand I am advised (if I am an international volunteer) to have an Insurance Policy to cover emergency medical repatriation and will provide a copy of the policy and insurance company details to ONM where this is held.

Authorisation

In the event of any accident, illness or injury sustained, suffered or otherwise affecting me, I, _____ authorize the leadership of Our Neighbours Ministry to contact my next of kin or relatives, to obtain any necessary medical assistance or treatment and to carry out first aid treatment as may be required, in the event that I am unable to do so.

I understand that Our Neighbours Ministry takes no responsibility for the finances, travel arrangements, health or welfare of volunteers.

I also understand that Our Neighbours Ministry has determined that it will not pay ransom nor yield to demands of anyone who takes hostage to anyone who comes as a volunteer.

Indemnity

I, _____ agree that volunteering with Our Neighbours Ministry is entirely at my own initiative and I take full responsibility for my financial well-being, travel arrangements and physical welfare for the duration of my volunteer experience. I have taken every care in preparing myself. I understand that overseas travel can be dangerous and that medical expenses can be high should I need to receive medical attention while overseas.

Signature of Volunteer:	
Date:	
Signature of Team Leader	
Date:	
Signature of Witness:	
Date:	

Purpose, Vision and Mission

Purpose

To glorify God by showing His love in reaching out to the poorest of the poor and restoring those that have lost hope.

Vision

To be an integrated, sustainable and renowned organisation, raising previously vulnerable men and women to a place of significance and influence, within the Zimbabwe community.

Mission

- Integrating abandoned and other babies and children in need of care into loving families and communities;
- Enabling vulnerable children and youths to be restored into a place of community, love and development;
- Providing holistic education and life skills to vulnerable children and youths;
- Restoring hope, dignity and empowering the poorest of the poor, nurturing a 'self- help' mentality; and
- Rehabilitating and restoring people with mental and physical challenges into the community.

Our Neighbours Ministry Core Values

1. **Jesus and the Kingdom of God.** Our Neighbours Ministry exists to serve God and follow Jesus. It was started in response to His leading and love. We actively seek His will, and are guided by values of the Kingdom of God. As we follow Jesus, we desire to be part of seeing some of His Kingdom come on earth.
2. **Glory to God.** We seek to give God all of the glory for Our Neighbours Ministry.
3. **Showing God's love.** We aim to show God's love to everyone that we come in contact with, those we aim to serve, staff, partners and the community.
4. **Focus on the most vulnerable and poor.** Our focus is on loving and assisting the poorest of the poor, the vulnerable, the disadvantaged, the orphans, and the widows. God's passionate love for the poor leads us; His compassion towards their vulnerability and narrow choice range inspires us. We seek to be empathetic.
5. **Valuing people.** We are dedicated to valuing people, those that we are reaching out to and interact with, as equals, recognising that all of us are made in God's image. We will work against an 'us and them' culture that so often exists in society in its various forms, recognising everyone as having strengths and assets, and weaknesses and vulnerabilities. Without Christ all are poor and so in Christ there is no 'rich' and 'poor'. We will be respectful in our communication about people and situations.
6. **Hope.** We specifically recognise God's redeeming and transformational power for all people, and the hope that is in Christ. We recognise God's desire that all submit their lives to His magnificent purposes.
7. **Body Ministry and Relationships.** We are thankful for all of the people, churches and organisations that God has led to be part of Our Neighbours Ministry, through active involvement, relationship and partnership. These enable Our Neighbours Ministry. We really value all of these, each with their different roles.
8. **Accountability.** We will be accountable and transparent in our use of finances and other resources. We will demonstrate integrity in everything we do and steward resources diligently.
9. **Doing our best.** We seek to do our best, working hard, as unto the Lord. In doing this, we will seek to operate professionally and efficiently, whilst not losing the priority of people and relationships. Col 3:23
10. **Faithfulness and love.** We will measure success by our faithfulness of service to God and love of people. Whilst considering needs, we will guard against success being measured in terms of numbers.
11. **Mercy.** We greatly value graciousness, in response to that which we have been shown by Jesus.

In coming up with a more concise list, for use in some circumstances, we summarised our values as:

1. **Love.** Giving one's life to the next person, seeing and viewing people the way God does.
2. **Hope.** Giving restoration, second chances and a purpose for life to people.
3. **Faith.** Believing in God, walking by faith, trusting God's faithfulness, and faith accompanied by works.
4. **Stewardship.** Serving in faithful, honest, integral accountability.

In terms of the 'culture' that we seek to develop and have at ONM, as well as being guided by the values that we have, we have the following guidelines, in priority order:

1. We seek to have a 'Bible-based culture';
2. We seek to be relevant and appropriate for the Zimbabwe culture and environment in which we are based and live; and
3. We appreciate and value the relationships and partnerships we have with many people, from different races and cultures, and we will seek to learn from all of these also.